

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 ACDA-12 HA-05

EB-08 MCT-01 /146 W

-----129863 021344Z /72

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7849

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 2487

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PORG, SY

SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: NACB MEETING

REF: STATE 97545, DAMASCUS 2412, 2413, 2414

1. POLOFF RAISED ISSUES STATE REFTEL APRIL 27 WITH MFA DEPUTY DIRECTOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DIVISION DIRECTOR JAZZAR, WITH EXCEPTION OF MIDDLE EAST, AND PUERTO RICO. LATTER ISSUE HAD BEEN FULLY COVERED IN DISCUSSION MARCH 30 (DAMASCUS 1765) AND JAZZAR SAID THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN SYRIAN POSITION. GENERAL MIDDLE EAST TALKING POINTS WERE NOT GEARED TOWARD SYRIA AND WOULD HAVE LED TO STERILE EXCHANGE WHILE QUESTION OF LEBANON HAS BEEN COVERED AT ALL LEVELS, MOST RECENTLY APRIL 25 (DAMASCUS 2326). NAMIBIA, SSOD, AND KOREA COVERED DAMASCUS REFTELS.

2. MASS MEDIA: JAZZAR SAID THAT SYRIA'S PROBLEM WAS NOT SO MUCH INFORMATION THAT WAS COMING INTO SYRIA AS SYRIAN EFFORTS TO GET A FAIR HEARING IN WESTERN COUNTRIES LIKE THE U.S. THE RECORD HAS IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY OVER PAST FEW YEARS, BUT STILL THE WESTERN MEDIA MAKES MISTAKES DUE TO LACK OF KNOWLEDGE (#) JAZZAR NOTED AS AN EXAMPLE OF
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BIAS THE PHRASE "PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS CARRYING SOVIET SUPPLIED ARMS." POLOFF COMMENTED HE HAD OFTEN READ SIMILAR PHRASES IN SYRIAN PRESS SUBSTITUTING (#) AND US

FOR PALESTINIAN AND SOVIET. JAZZAR SMILED AND CONCLUDED

THAT THE CONCEPT OF A NAM INFORMATION PROGRAM WAS PROBABLY IMPRACTICAL AND SYRIA WOULD FOCUS ON IMPROVING ITS OWN EMBASSIES' INFORMATION PROGRAMS INSTEAD.

3. HUMAN RIGHTS: JAZZAR DID NOT EXPECT HUMAN RIGHTS TO BE DISCUSSED SPECIFICALLY, AT LEAST IN SENSE USG MEANS, I.E., INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS. JAZZAR LAUNCHED INTO FAMILIAR DISCUSSION OF US PRIORITIES, FOCUSING ON INDIVIDUAL ABUSES WHEN ENTIRE PEOPLES LIKE PALESTINIANS, NAMIBIANS, BLACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA, ETC. ARE DENIED THEIR BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS. THIS IS FOCUS SYRIA SEEKS TO PURSUE IN NAM. POLOFF MENTIONED SYRIA'S NEW FREEDOM HOUSE CLASSIFICATION AS "PARTLY FREE" STATE. JAZZAR SAID HE WAS NOT AWARE OF THIS CHANGE FROM "NOT FREE" CATEGORY AND ASKED FOR A COPY OF THE REPORT. PRESIDENT AL-ASSAD WILL WANT TO SEE THIS, HE CLAIMED. EMBASSY IS PROVIDING COPY.

4. NORTH/SOUTH: JAZZAR BEGGED OFF ON THIS TOPIC FOR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE.

5. GUAM: JAZZAR SAID THAT QUESTION OF GUAM HAD NOT COME UP IN BILATERAL TALKS WITH CUBANS AND HE DID NOT EXPECT ISSUE TO BE RAISED SPECIFICALLY IN NACB MEETING ALTHOUGH IT MIGHT BE INCLUDED IN GENERAL DISCUSSION OF FOREIGN BASES. PELLETREAU

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